

TOWN OF FLORENCE

REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION AGENDA

MINUTES OF THE TOWN OF FLORENCE REDEVELOPMENT COMMISSION HELD ON TUESDAY OCTOBER 28TH, 2008 AT 6:30 P.M. AT THE TOWN OF FLORENCE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, LOCATED AT 775 NORTH MAIN STREET, FLORENCE, ARIZONA.

CALL TO ORDER

Vice-Chairman Puglia called the meeting to order at 6:38 p.m.

ROLL CALL:

Present: Horan, Kelly, Puglia, and Swart

Absent: Speck

DOWNTOWN REDEVELOPMENT PLAN DRAFT DISCUSSION

Mr. Brad Bielenberg stated that the comments were reviewed, and the topics that will be included in the report include sustainability, principles, creating design principles and lead certification. He stated the goal is to create something unique for downtown Florence that is sustainable and can be promoted to attract businesses. This may also help to acquire additional grants to restore other buildings. A hindrance will be the energy costs even once the building is restored because they are not energy efficient.

Jennifer Evans, Main Street Program, stated that is a good idea to encourage the use of green building practices in the downtown area. She believes that the wording could be included to strongly encourage the use of green building practices, but since the owners are already working on a "shoestring" budget, mandating certain regulations could pose a hardship for them.

Commissioner Horan stated that he was pleased with the way the energy costs were approached in the plan. He believes the way it is presented and the approach as to how it can be done is very realistic. He was also pleased that a natural habitat was included.

Mr. Gilbert Oglin, Planner, stated in regards to green building practices, if it is a recommendation and not a regulation, it is hard to enforce.

Mr. Bielenberg stated there needs to be regulations especially for new buildings.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that he liked the layout of the plan.

Mr. Oglin stated that another issue may be Proposition 207 that was passed. He stated that when ordinances are passed that change a person's property, it may ensue in a lawsuit.

Scott Powell, Economic Development Coordinator discussed the vision of the plan.

Mr. Oglin stated that he liked the vision component of the plan.

Mr. Bielenberg stated the vision may tie more into the implementation of the plan. He stated that the vision statement discussed was "Honoring the past while energizing the present for a vibrant future". It has been further consolidated to "A Rich Heritage, a Vibrant Future"; which they feel summarizes the vision better. He added that the district will be expanded.

Mr. Powell stated that he would like to bring back the underdeveloped and undeveloped parcels and make that a goal. He would also like to create more business assistance as well as an in-fill district. He feels that the plan touches on them, but does not call them out specifically.

Vice-Chairman Puglia agreed that some of the goals need to be expanded.

Mr. Ernie Feliz stated that the CAC campus can be located at the courthouse and can help with foot traffic.

Ms. Evans stated that she doesn't believe the Town should plan the use of the courthouse. She believes the plan has some limitations and perhaps it can be worded to work in conjunction with Pinal County. She felt that some of the language was very strong and in other places the wording was very vague. In regards to the gathering place, she understood it to be the first option would be the courthouse, with an alternate location to be at Jacques Square. She does not agree with the location at the courthouse.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that the gathering place would not take up the space of 8th and 11th Streets, but rather use the streets.

Ms. Evans stated that it needs to be clearly defined in the plan and she feels that there is plenty of room in the downtown area considering the size of our special events. She felt the downtown heart is the corner of 8th and Main.

Mr. Powell doesn't like that Jacques Square is a parking lot. It can be changed to be more reflective as a gathering place.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that CAC has no plans to come to Florence, which is stated in their bond. He would prefer it to reflect something as a learning facility, rather than define the exact school.

Commissioner Horan stated that it should be defined as life-long learning facility.

Mr. Powell discussed the parking issues.

Ms. Evans stated that the plan is recommending a parking limit for the downtown area, but feels if you put a limit on parking, you may be chasing your customers away. She would prefer that a parking plan be created and guidance is done through the professionals. She is not in agreement with this portion of the plan. She stated that her other concern is how would the Police Department enforce the parking times.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that a parking maximum is required. He added that there are parking lots less than 200 feet away from the business.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that there would be an enforcement cost. The Police Department would need to monitor the parking and he isn't sure if they are able to take this duty on as well. He believes that the cars parked on Main Street are needed. He believes people attract people.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that the section will be revised.

Mr. Oglin stated that bike racks are needed in the downtown area and they should be planned for.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that bikes can ride down Main Street without necessarily having a designated bike lane.

Discussion occurred amongst how bikers can be incorporated in the downtown.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that he would like the continuation of the sidewalks.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that Willow will become a true multi-modal green street where a strong connection is allowed from the Florence High School to Heritage Park and to the Gila River across to Anthem so that there is a very strong pedestrian, bicycle, horse connection. This section needs to be strengthened.

Ms. Evans stated that the plan lists an equestrian trail leading to the Main Street, Downtown area. She inquired how it will be managed, who will clean the streets, and how will the horses be tethered. She felt the special conditions need to be addressed.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that it brings the feel back of a western town and that may be what draws people here.

Ms. Evans stated that a map was improperly labeled and asked that the maps be properly labeled. She does not feel that incentive for a horse and carriage be used.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that it should have been removed.

Mr. Oglin commented that funding is an issue and he is concerned about the timelines as well as the price of signage. He agrees the ideas are great, but without funding, they are unable to be realized. He suggested that the ideas be passed before the department which is expected to fund that portion of the plan.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that the intent of the timelines is an incentive to get something started, and is flexible.

Ms. Evans suggested attaching realistic timelines due to the financial constraints for a realistic approach for implementation.

Mr. Oglin stated that priorities are not necessarily the same between departments and by putting timelines and financial responsibilities on other departments who may have other priorities and be unable to meet the deadline can cause "name blaming". He suggested contacting the department for ideas as to how to implement it.

Discussion occurred regarding the timeline of the project and the responsibility being imposed on departments. The timeline needs to be realistic.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that when the timelines were done, the economic situation was different that it is now. It is now necessary to revise the timeline to be realistic. It is necessary to find outside funding sources and a complete plan needs to be done in order to find funding.

Mr. Bielenberg stated that all goals need to have the timeline and funding. The short-term goals are between 1 – 5 years. There are also mid-term and long-term goals as well. The document is meant to be adjusted when economic situations arise. It should be used as a breathing document. The plan needs to be updated every ten years.

Mr. Oglin stated that he was happy with the document and that it read well. He stated that some maps were hard to read and contain too much information.

Mr. Powell stated that more pictures of Florence be used.

MINUTES: APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES FOR THE MEETING HELD AUGUST 26, 2008

On motion of Commissioner Horan, seconded by Commissioner Kelly and carried to approve the August 26th minutes.

STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Powell stated that a special meeting will be held in early November. He will notify everyone once the draft is returned. If approved by the Board, it will move forward to

the Council. He asked that everyone consider the time and date for next year's meetings. Other announcements included:

- Acknowledged Starla Jackson and stated that she will be considered at the Town Council's November 3, 2008 meeting to fill the vacancy by Commissioner Swart, whose seat is to expire on December 31, 2008. She will then need to reapply in January as will Chairman Speck.
- Tinderbox will have their ribbon cutting on October 31, 2008
- Western Feed and Supply will have their ribbon cutting on November 1, 2008.
- The Main Street Program is looking for volunteers.
- Mr. Feliz will be hosting the Save the Courthouse meeting on October 29, 2008.
- A grant application will be submitted for the intersection of Diversion Dam and SH79. He will be submitting a draft letter of support from the Commission for the grant.
- There is interest in the Silver King Hotel. The lease will be brought before the Commission for input.

Vice-Chairman Puglia stated that the Florence Reminder announced that the Redevelopment Commission was given the assignment of the Silver King Hotel.

Mr. Powell stated that he is starting to design the guidelines and what types of businesses should go in the building.

NEXT MEETING DATE: SPECIAL MEETING IN EARLY NOVEMBER

Vice-Chairman stated that the next meeting will be in early November.

CALL TO THE PUBLIC

There were not public comments.

CALL TO THE BOARD

There were no Board comments.

ADJOURNMENT

Vice-Chairman Puglia adjourned the meeting at 7:53 p.m.



Vice-Chairman Puglia